

# **PSCI 3206: Environment & Public Policy**

**Fall 2020 • Tue/Thu 12:45-2:00 pm**

**UMC 210 + Hybrid Remote**

Professor: Nancy Billica | [billica@colorado.edu](mailto:billica@colorado.edu)  
TA: Michelle Benedum | [Michelle.Benedum@colorado.edu](mailto:Michelle.Benedum@colorado.edu)

Optional Zoom group discussion:  
Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 pm w/ Prof. Billica Or Thursdays 2:30-3:30 w/ TA Michelle

Individual drop-in office hours:  
Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30 pm w/ Prof. Billica  
Or email for appointment w/ either TA Michelle or Prof. Billica

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the definition, formulation and implementation of public policy concerning the environment. Throughout, we will be focusing on the interplay between policy content (how we define the issues and what options we select for addressing those issues) and political processes (how we build support and develop compromise among divergent values and interests in order to forge agreement). Building knowledge of US environmental policy will draw on class lectures, readings, discussion, and writing assignments. Students will also carry out independent environmental policy research.

Class topics are organized around four basic themes. First, we will examine the dynamic nature of environmental policy issues, including historic policy decisions. Second, policymaking processes will be reviewed, including agenda setting, policy formulation and implementation of environmental policy decisions. Third, it turns out that people apply a widely divergent set of values in making environmental policy choices. What are some of these competing policy perspectives? Among others, we will consider regulatory imperatives, arguments for economic flexibility, the role of scientific information, environmental ethics positions, considerations of justice, and the limits and opportunities presented by the US system of federalism. Finally, the historic developments, policy processes and competing values and interests come together in our examination of specific policy cases, including issues related to pollution control, natural resource management, and emerging issues related to climate change and sustainability. How do these various factors influence policy design and the choice of policy tools adopted to address environmental issues? Our goal is to untangle the many elements of environmental policy to better understand our current environmental circumstances and future options moving forward.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will:

- gain knowledge of the important features of major US environmental policies
- learn about the evolving nature of environmental policy issues and problem definition, including ongoing controversies and efforts to revise policy
- examine the political processes and key actors affecting environmental policy actions and decisions
- conduct primary resource research on an environmental policy issue of personal interest and preparing a policy brief with information providing summary, comparison, and recommendations
- practice critical thinking, analytical discussion, and writing skills.

## READINGS

Readings are drawn from one book and additional materials available as listed, either on the Canvas class page or the internet. Students should also plan to regularly read the news for current developments in environmental policy, which will be discussed in class on an ongoing basis.

James Salzman and Barton H. Thompson, Jr., *Environmental Law and Policy*, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Foundation Press, 2014).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Date Due	Assignments	Grading
See weekly schedule & updates on Canvas	Class participation: This includes submissions to the class discussion board, live discussion opportunities, class surveys, etc. Flexible options for participation; take part in at least 10	15%
Fri, Sept 11 Fri, Oct 2 Fri, Oct 23 Fri, Nov 13	Writing assignments – best of 3 out of 4, drawing on readings, lectures & applications Assignment 1 (week 3) Assignment 2 (week 6) Assignment 3 (week 9) Assignment 4 (week 12)	40%
Fri, Oct 30	Research Assignment Part A, Environmental issue inquiry (researching a policy issue of your choice); details on Canvas	15%
Mon, Nov 23	Research Assignment Part B, Environmental policy brief (providing focused policy discussion and recommendations on your selected environmental policy issue); details on Canvas	15%
Fri, Dec 11	Final writing assignment; requirements posted to Canvas one week in advance	15%

## HYBRID COURSE DESIGN AND EXPECTATIONS

There are many variations of hybrid instruction. This course on the American Congress replaces some of the traditional in-class time with online learning.

- **Hybrid schedule:** While plans might be altered if conditions change, the class is designed to meet in-person with one-half of the students on Tuesdays, and the other half on Thursdays. Students not scheduled to meet in-person are asked to participate via live remote instruction.
  - Tuesday in-person schedule: those with student ID numbers ending in even numbers.
  - Thursday in-person schedule: those with student ID numbers ending in odd numbers.
  - You are asked to adhere to these in-class assignment rules so that we as a class follow the university's Covid-safe room capacity rules.
  - Classroom lectures will be recorded and uploaded on Canvas so that students who are unable to attend in-person lectures and/or live remote class sessions may participate asynchronously.
  - Any schedule changes will be announced as soon as information is available.

- **Canvas, our common classroom space:** Plan to regularly check Canvas for updated information, including announcements, schedule reminders and adjustments, assignment links, readings, and other supplemental materials.
- **Class participation:** Active engagement is valuable in any learning environment. This is especially true in a course that requires critical examination of both facts and assumptions, and where the exchange of ideas is an important avenue for expanding our collective knowledge and understanding. For this hybrid course, class participation will be encouraged and measured through a mix of options:
  - Full points for class participation can be achieved by engaging in at least 10 class participation activities across the semester.
  - In most weeks, students have the opportunity to actively engage with classmates either by posting a response to the discussion board or to logging in during regularly scheduled office hours for active consideration of the discussion board questions of the week and/or anything else of interest.
  - Additional opportunities for class participation can be anticipated and will be posted on Canvas.
- **Expectations for out-of-class work:** Although we will meet in-person less frequently than in a regular course, this course requires the SAME amount of work. Taking a hybrid course demands a lot of discipline, self-directions, and time management skills. You will be expected to do work outside of class that may otherwise have been previously conducted in-class.
- **Technical requirements and support:** You will need regular access to a computer with reliable Internet access to complete assignments and tasks. If you have your own computer or are considering purchasing hardware, please refer to [OIT's supported software and hardware list](#). For help with all Office of Information Technology services, email [oithelp@colorado.edu](mailto:oithelp@colorado.edu) or call 303-735-4357 (5-4357 from campus phones).

## CLASS POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

- **Classroom etiquette:** The basic rule is one of respect. The goal is to create a community where all feel free to participate in classroom and Zoom meeting discussion and in discussion board posts. As a class, we are all called to be open to the ideas and contributions of others and to thereby cultivate better knowledge and understanding. We should expect to disagree with each other on at least some issues of debate, but discussion and disagreement must be expressed in a manner that recognizes the dignity of all and is open to learning from other perspectives. Disrespectful language and/or behavior will not be tolerated.
- **Class communications:** Good communications are fundamental. Your professor will strive for clear and timely communications on the class schedule, materials, and assignments, and any changes to these as we proceed. This also means that students should feel free to ask questions and offer up comments on an ongoing basis. We should all plan to maintain clear and timely communications on changes in status due to illness or quarantine. Specifically, plan to email as soon as possible to alert your professor about class absence or the need for assignment extensions or accommodations.
- **Assignment submissions and due dates:**
  - Students are responsible for ensuring that assignments are successfully submitted to Canvas on time and in accessible format (.doc, .docx or .pdf). Be sure to check your document after submission to see that it is readable and that the correct document was uploaded. Back-up copies of assignments may be submitted via email if you're not sure Canvas is working.

- Assignments are due on the due dates. Students with legitimate, documented reasons for missing an exam or assignment deadline should consult with the professor *prior to* the due date for alternative arrangements and exemption from late penalties.
- In the absence of a pre-approved exception or documented emergency, late penalties apply, with deductions, as follows:
  - Submitted within 24 hours of the due date: -10%
  - For each additional day late: add an additional -10%
  - Assignments submitted 5 or more days overdue accepted at 50% credit
- **Grading:** While most assignment grades will be posted on Canvas, the complete set of grading records will be maintained by the professor (and may not be fully reflected on Canvas). This includes any deductions related to class participation.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- **Classroom Behavior:** Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- **Requirements for COVID-19:** As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:
  - maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
  - wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
  - clean local work area,
  - practice hand hygiene,
  - follow public health orders, and
  - if sick and you live off campus, do not come onto campus (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert [CU Boulder Medical Services](#).

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#). For more information, see the policies on [COVID-19 Health and Safety](#) and [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#). If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please see the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

Before returning to campus, all students must complete the [COVID-19 Student Health and Expectations Course](#). Before coming on to campus each day, all students are required to complete a [Daily Health Form](#).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and complete the [Health Questionnaire and Illness Reporting Form](#) remotely. In this class, if you are

sick or quarantined plan to communicate your status as soon as possible via email to your professor so that any assignment extensions or accommodations may be adopted.

- **Accommodation for Disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.
- **Preferred Student Names and Pronouns:** CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.
- **Honor Code:** All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).
- **Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation:** The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

- **Religious Holidays:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, plan to communicate your status as soon as possible via email to your professor so that any assignment extensions may be adopted.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

**PSCI 3206, Environment & Public Policy**  
**FALL 2020 CLASS SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS**

\*\*\* subject to change \*\*\*

*Assumptions: Our class will meet as scheduled with students participating either in-person in the classroom or live remote. Given special Covid room capacity rules, one-half of the students will be scheduled to meet in the classroom on Tuesdays (those with student ID numbers ending in even numbers), and the other half on Thursdays (those with ID numbers ending in odd numbers). Students may also participate asynchronously via recorded lectures to be uploaded on Canvas.*

Week	Dates	TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS
1	Aug 25 & 27	<p><b>Introducing US environmental policy, both substance &amp; process</b></p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Environmental Law &amp; Policy</i>, Chap 1</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Trump Administration is Reversing 100 Environmental Rules. Here’s the Full List,” <i>New York Times</i>, by Nadja Popovich, Livia Albeck-Ripka and Kendra Pierre-Louis, updated July 15, 2020; available on Canvas and at <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html">https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html</a></li> </ul> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion board post #1 due Thursday, Aug 27, 11:59 pm</li> <li>▪ Class opinion poll responses due Friday, Aug 28, 11:59 pm</li> <li>▪ Optional: Live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> </ul>
Week 2	Sept 1 & 3	<p><b>Historic roots and developments in US environmental policy</b></p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Environmental Law &amp; Policy</i>, Chap 2</li> <li>▪ Zachary Smith, “Changing Cultural and Social Beliefs: From Conservation to Environmentalism,” Chap. 2 in <i>The Environmental Policy Paradox</i>; on Canvas.</li> <li>▪ David Bearden, et al, “Environmental Laws: Summaries of Major Statutes Administered by the Environmental Protection Agency,” Congressional Research Service, December 20, 2013; on Canvas. Skim for content, and use as a resource throughout the course for reviewing the contents of major environmental laws.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jack Lewis, “Looking Backward: A Historical Perspective on Environmental Regulations,” <i>EPA Journal</i> (March 1988); on Canvas.</li> </ul> <p>Assignment – options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take part in live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> <li>▪ OR: Discussion board post #2 due Thursday, Sept 3, 11:59 pm</li> </ul>



<p><b>Week 6</b></p>	<p>Sept 29 &amp; Oct 1</p>	<p><b>Administering environmental laws – the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) &amp; the Endangered Species Act (ESA)</b></p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Environmental Law &amp; Policy</i>, Chaps 10 &amp; 12</li> <li>▪ M. Lynne Corn &amp; Alexandra M. Wyatt, “The Endangered Species Act: A Primer,” Congressional Research Service, September 8, 2016; on Canvas.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stories about the Endangered Species Act, short National Public Radio podcasts, <a href="https://www.npr.org/tags/533221527/endangered-species-act">https://www.npr.org/tags/533221527/endangered-species-act</a>.</li> <li>▪ Charise Johnson, “The Endangered Species Act is Itself Endangered,” Union of Concerned Scientists Blog, 16 July 2018, <a href="https://blog.ucsusa.org/charise-johnson/the-endangered-species-act-is-itself-endangered">https://blog.ucsusa.org/charise-johnson/the-endangered-species-act-is-itself-endangered</a>.</li> <li>▪ US Fish &amp; Wildlife Service, “Endangered Species Act,” <a href="https://www.fws.gov/endangered/laws-policies/">https://www.fws.gov/endangered/laws-policies/</a>.</li> </ul> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing assignment #2 due Friday, Oct 2, 11:59 pm</li> <li>▪ Optional: Live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 7</b></p>	<p>Oct 6 &amp; 8</p>	<p><b>The elements of policy design &amp; introducing the Clean Air Act of 1970 (CAA)</b></p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Michael Kraft &amp; Scott Furlong, “Public Problems and Policy Alternatives,” Chap 5 in <i>Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives</i>; on Canvas.</li> <li>▪ <i>Environmental Law &amp; Policy</i>, Chap 5</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, “Systematically Pinching Ideas: A Comparative Approach to Policy Design,” <i>Journal of Public Policy</i> 8 (Spring 1988): 61-80; on Canvas.</li> <li>▪ Judith A. Layzer, “The Nation Tackles Air and Water Pollution: The Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts,” Chap. 2 in <i>The Environmental Case</i>; on Canvas.</li> </ul> <p>Assignment – options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take part in live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> <li>▪ OR: Discussion board post #5 due Thursday, Oct 8, 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 8</b></p>	<p>Oct 13 &amp; 15</p>	<p><b>Command &amp; control regulatory framework and CAA amendments: changing approaches and options for regulating air quality</b></p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Environmental Law &amp; Policy</i>, Chap 5</li> <li>▪ Judith A. Layzer, “Market-Based Solutions: Acid Rain and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990,” Chap. 5 in <i>The Environmental Case: Translating Values Into Policy</i>; on Canvas.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Winston Harrington and Richard D. Morgenstern, “Economic Incentives versus Command and Control: What’s the Best Approach for Solving Environmental Problems?” <i>Resources</i> (Fall/Winter 2004), a publication of Resources for the Future; on Canvas.</li> </ul> <p>Assignment – options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take part in live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> <li>▪ OR: Discussion board post #6 due Thursday, Oct 15, 11:59 pm</li> </ul>



		<p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing assignment #4 due Friday, Nov 13, 11:59 pm</li> <li>▪ Optional: Live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> </ul>
<b>13</b>	Nov 17 & 19	<p><b>Waste management</b></p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Environmental Law &amp; Policy</i>, Chap 9</li> <li>▪ Eco-Cycle, “Zero Waste: The Choice for a Sustainable Community,” <a href="http://www.ecocycle.org/zerowaste">http://www.ecocycle.org/zerowaste</a></li> <li>▪ Environmental Working Group, “Chemical Policy (TSCA).” Take a look at basic information and recent reports on US chemical policy under the Toxic Substances Control Act, available at <a href="https://www.ewg.org/key-issues/toxics/chemical-policy">https://www.ewg.org/key-issues/toxics/chemical-policy</a>.</li> </ul> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research Assignment Part B, Environmental policy brief, due Monday, Nov 23, 11:59 pm – i.e., due next week on Monday</li> <li>▪ Optional: Live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm (ie, this week on Nov 18 or 19)</li> </ul>
<b>14</b>	Nov 24	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>No assigned reading</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See above: Research Assignment Part B, Environmental policy brief, due Monday, Nov 23, 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
<b>15</b>	Dec 1 & 3  Dec 3	<p><b>Building coalitions of support around environmental policy</b></p> <p>Assignment – options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take part in live office hours discussion on Wed at 1:00 pm or Thurs at 2:30 pm</li> <li>▪ OR: Discussion board post #8 due Thursday, Dec 3, 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
<b>Final</b>	Dec 11	<p><b>FINAL ASSIGNMENT</b> due to Canvas no later than 11:59 pm on Friday (assignment to be posted to Canvas at least one week in advance of the due date)</p>